international oil prices are likely to be reflected in the domestic prices of petrol and diesel.

The retail selling prices of petrol and diesel at Delhi were revised twice during March 2003 by the PSU oil companies as given under:

Rs/Litre

	1.3.03	16.3.03
Petrol	32.10 (1.39)*	33.49 (1.39)*
Diesel	21.21 (1.37)*	22.12 (0.91)*

(*Figures in brackets give increase over the earlier price.)

The increase in prices of diesel and petroleum impacts directly Wholesale Price Index (WPI) based inflation through their weight in WPI. There is also an additional indirect impact of roughly equal magnitude on WPI based inflation of such increase in the prices of diesel and petroleum.

The Government is monitoring the situation.

ONGC values limited

2743. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Commission has moved a proposal to float a special purpose vehicle, ONGC Values Ltd. with its equity restricted to 49 per cent with balance of equity being with Non-Government financial institutions like ICICI Ltd. IDFC and HDFC with neither holding more than 25 per cent;

(b) if so, the proposed terms of the new entity and the main objective and purpose thereof indicating the circumstances leading to such proposal; and

(c) what is Government's decision in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR):

(a) to (c) Inview of the recent policy changes in the hydrocarbon sector, Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), a Navratna Public Sector Undertaking in the upstream hydrocarbon sector, intends to expand its business through value chain integration encompassing refining and marketing sectors also, so that it can effectively face market competition. In this scenario, examination of various options by the management of ONGC, for efficient structure and to seize emerging business opportunities, has been a continuous process. ONGC has informed that their Board of Directors has not taken any decision on formationof the said Non-Government joint venture, as of now.

Allotment of dealership under reservation category in Gujarat

2744. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is reservation for SC/ST and unemployed youth in the allotment of LPG agencies and retail outlets of public sector oil companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of gas agencies and retail outlets allotted in Gujarat under reservation category during the last three years, year-wise and agency/outlet-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Government have provided the reservation of 25% in favour of SC/ST category in the locations included in the marketing plans approved prior to dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM). However, there was no reservation for unemployed youth category.

(c) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have allotted 12 Retail Outlets (ROs) and 24 LPG distributorships in the State of Gujarat under SC/ST category during the last three years.